



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
February 20, 2006

Robert L. Genuario
Secretary
Office of Policy and Management

Testimony on Various Education Bills

Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleischmann and distinguished members of the Education Committee thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on the bills being heard today.

S.B. No. 1113 An Act Concerning Unified School Districts #1 Education Credit
I am here before you to request favorable consideration of S.B. No. 1113 An Act Concerning Unified School Districts #1 Education Credit. When an ex-offender enrolls in a new school district, this bill would specifically require that school district to notify the Department of Corrections (DOC) within ten (10) days after the date of enrollment so that DOC can forward the student's Unified School District #1 education records to the new school. This will allow the new school district to properly credit the student for all instruction received at DOC.

S.B. No. 1205 – An Act Concerning Interdistrict Magnet Schools

We are opposed to subsections (j) and (k) of Section 1 in this bill because S.B. No. 1114 *An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations Regarding Education* proposes the same language in regards to charging tuition to participating districts and not denying enrollment if space is available. We ask that the Governor's bill be supported. The bill also provides that the Department of Education will perform audits of some RESC-operated magnet schools, RESC-operated magnet schools will file a financial audit with the Department of Education annually and that the Department will randomly select a RESC-operated magnet school to conduct a comprehensive financial audit to be paid for by the RESC. We are not opposed to this new subsection (l) as it will provide the Department with valuable information in regards to financing RESC-Operated Magnet Schools.

H.B. No. 7135 – An Act Concerning the Foundation Level of the Education Cost Sharing Grant and the Minimum Expenditure Requirement

We are opposed to this bill because the Governor has proposed changes to the ECS formula and the Minimum Expenditure Requirement in S.B. No. 1114 *An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations Regarding Education*. We

ask that the Governor's bill be supported. The Governor is proposing to phase in the Commission on Education Finance's recommendations for simplifying and updating the formula along with making adjustments to no longer double count Magnet School students in the resident student count. The bill before you would provide for no phase in, which would mean that well over \$1.1 billion would need to be added to the budget in FY2008.

H.B. No. 7136 – An Act Concerning a Grant to Match Federal and Private Dollars to Promote Early Childhood Literacy in the Pediatric Care Settings

We are opposed to this bill because the Governor has proposed significant changes to early childhood education in her Early Childhood Initiative. The Governor is implementing many of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet's recommendations, including increasing preschools slots, expanding eligibility for the Birth-to-Three program, and developing early childhood education programs in higher education among other initiatives. We ask that the Governor's Early Childhood Initiative be supported.

H.B. No. 7175 – An Act Concerning School Choice

We are opposed to this bill because the Governor has proposed to significantly increase the funds available for receiving districts that have at least ten out-of-district students in the OPEN Choice program in S.B. No. 1114 *An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations Regarding Education*. The Governor is proposing to increase this fund to \$1 million up from its current amount of \$350,000. This bill would delete any mention of the amount of the fund and increase the per student bonus to \$3,000. We ask that the Governor's bill be supported.

H.B. No. 7176 – An Act Concerning Special Education

We are opposed to this bill because with the significant increases in education funding as proposed by the Governor, an increase of this magnitude for special education is not warranted. The Governor, in her Education Initiative, is proposing to fully fund special education at a level in excess of 4.5 times the average per pupil educational costs and to provide a significant increase in the ECS grant in which special education students are counted. We ask the Governor's Education Initiative be supported.

H.B. No. 7177 – An Act Concerning Family Resource Centers

We are opposed to this bill, which would add \$3.2 million to the budget. While providing parents with information to aid their children in reaching developmental milestones is important, an increase in of this magnitude is not advisable. The Governor's Early Childhood Initiative is expected to significantly impact the population that is targeted in this bill.

Please note that I will be providing more detailed testimony in person on the Governor's Education bill at an upcoming public hearing before this committee. In the meantime, I would like to again thank the committee for the opportunity to present this testimony.